

**Statement by H.E. Mr. Hazem Shabat, Ambassador of the State of Palestine to the Republic of Kenya, and Permanent Representative to UNEP, UN-Habitat and UNON, Chairperson of the Group of 77 and China, Nairobi Chapter, at the Second Session of the Executive Board of UN-Habitat (Nairobi, 27<sup>th</sup> of October 2020)**

The Group of 77 and China thanks the Executive Director Madame Maimunah Sharif and Madam Martha Delgado - President of UN-Habitat Assembly, and the Secretariat of UN-Habitat for their collective efforts in ensuring continuity and efficiency of work of the organization despite the challenges caused by the global pandemic, and thanks the Chair of the Executive Board for commencing and chairing this virtual second session of the Executive Board.

The Group wishes to express its appreciation for the three Ad-hoc Working Groups of the Executive Board, and wishes to thank the Ad-hoc Working Group on Working Methods, Chaired by Argentina DPR - **Mr. Martin Gronda** and Co-Chaired by Kenya - **Ms. Nancy Sipa** upon the fulfillment of its mandate by the end of this second session of the Executive Board, for its outstanding leading role in discussing the draft decisions to be adopted by the 2020 first and second sessions of the Executive Board, and the preparation of proposed working methods of the Executive Board of UN-Habitat .

It also would like to thank the Ad-hoc Working Group on Programmatic, Budgetary, and Administrative matters Chaired by Ambassador of Romania **Mrs Iulia Pataki**, and Co-Chaired by The High Commissioner of Pakistan **Ms. Saqlin Syedah**, for leading the discussions which resulted in recommending that the Foundation non-earmarked budget for the year 2021 should be of an amount of \$10 million for the draft budget of UN-Habitat for 2021;

Moreover, the Group wishes to thank the Chair of the Ad-Hoc working group on the development of a stakeholder engagement policy and look forward to having successful discussions leading to the development of a stakeholder policy towards the next session of the Executive Board.

With regards to **Agenda item 3** of the 2020 second session of the Executive Board on Financial, budgetary, and administrative matters, the Group acknowledges the content of the reports on *(1) Interim financial status as at 30 June 2020; (2) The Funding Status of the UN-Habitat as at 30 September 2020; (3) the update on the restructuring of UN-Habitat; (4) and the update on financing the UN-Habitat including the resource mobilization efforts*, and calls on UN-Habitat to ensure alignment of its budget with the approved work programme to better deliver the mandate of the organization, while the Group

stresses that setting a “realistic margin” for the budget, does not limit the idealism of the mandate which is aimed to be fulfilled given that budget, and does not restrict the existing ambition of UN-Habitat to deliver its mandate, its programme of work, the SDGs, and the NUA, especially during the highly challenging circumstances caused by the pandemic.

On the same agenda item, the Group wishes to remind Member States that the restructuring exercise was based on the pledges made to provide sufficient funding to the Programme once it undergoes significant progress; therefore, the Group invites Member States who have made pledges to fulfil their commitments towards contributing to the financing the Programme.

In view of Agenda item 4, namely *Action by UN-Habitat to address Geographical and Gender imbalances in the composition of its staff, and the report of the Executive Director on Recruitment, equitable geographical distribution and gender parity*- the Group wishes to demonstrate that the geographical under-representation in the UN-Habitat Secretariat is an issue of serious concern. Thus, the Group wishes to address a question on “*What are the concrete measures put into place within UN-Habitat to correct existing geographical imbalances? And what are the tools - if any- that are being used to correct this geographical imbalance?*”

On Agenda item 7 regarding the status of implementation of the resolutions and decisions adopted by the UN-Habitat Assembly at its first session, particularly *Resolution 1/3 on enhancing capacity-building for the implementation of the New Urban Agenda and the urban dimension of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development*; which is also discussed under agenda item 8, the Group wishes to call for improved delivery of capacity building services of UN-Habitat to Member States, especially developing countries, through offering solutions to problems inherently associated with urbanization, creating greater impact, and allowing itself to be a leading organization that responds to demands from Member States, cities and urban stakeholders.

Thank you Mr. Chairman